

REVIEWS

Flora of Australia, Volume 48, Ferns, Gymnosperms, and Allied Groups, by A. E. Orchard, Executive Editor, P. M. McCarthy, Volume Editor, and 21 contributors. 1998. CSIRO Publishing, P.O. Box 1139 (150 Oxford Street), Collingwood, Victoria 3066, Australia. xxi, 766 pp. Hardcover (ISBN 0 643 05971 7) \$US 94.95; softcover (ISBN 0 643 05972 5) \$59.95. May be ordered directly from <http://www.publish.csiro.au> or by e-mail: sales@publish.csiro.au.

Although Australia has had many fine local and regional pteridophyte floras, this is the first comprehensive treatment for the entire continent. It treats 456 species of pteridophytes, these classified into 112 genera and 35 families. For each species there is given nomenclatural and type information for the accepted name and its common synonyms, a short description, geographic distribution (with maps provided at the back of the book), specimens examined, and comments. There are 157 figures of pteridophytes, many of them color photographs, and the rest line drawings. Particularly helpful to users will be the illustrations by P. J. Edwards showing the indument characteristics of tree ferns. All of the illustrations are of high quality.

The introductory matter includes a helpful review by Mary D. Tindale of fern morphology, terminology, cytology, biogeography, ecology, and history of Australian fern floristics. Andrew Drinnan provides a well-researched overview of the history of fern phylogeny and classification, and Robert S. Hill and Gregory J. Jordan summarize the fossil record for Australian pteridophytes. A key to families is provided by P. M. McCarthy, and in the text the families are arranged by a phylogenetic, not alphabetical, sequence. The keys are of the indented type, not bracketed. A glossary of specialized pteridophyte terms, compiled mostly by Mary D. Tindale, is given toward the back of the book.

It is immensely satisfying to see so much information brought together for the entire Australian pteridophyte flora. This book is a major contribution to pteridology, and anyone seriously interested in pteridophytes will want a copy. Congratulations to our pteridological mates down under for a job well done!—ROBBIN C. MORAN, New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, NY 10458-5126.

Illustrierter Leitfaden zum Bestimmen der Farne und farnverwandten Pflanzen der Schweiz und angrenzender Gebiete, by Eugen Kopp and Ruth Schneebeli-Graf. 1998. Schweizerische Vereinigung der Farnfreunde. 226 pp.. Softcover (ISBN 3-9521349-0-2) CHF 45.00. May be ordered from Publications, Natural History Museum of Luzern, Kasernenplatz 5, CH-6003 Luzern, Switzerland (<http://www.luzern@naturmuseum.ch>). [In German].

They say that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. In this case, the Swiss Association of "Fern-friends" really liked "The Illustrated Guide to Ferns and Allied Plants of the British Isles" by Clive Jermy and Josephine Camus (1991,

Natural History Museum Publications, London). They liked it so well, in fact, that the group undertook to translate this book from English into German and to modify the contents to cover the pteridophytes growing in and around Switzerland. The result is a book that is quite similar in appearance to the Jermy and Camus guide, but contains a number of changes and additions to tailor it to a new audience. Kopp and Schneebeili-Graf have not only translated most of the original text, but have written new treatments for 20 of the 88 native taxa treated. The group also contracted with Peter Edwards, who provided the elegant illustrations in the original work, to provide drawings of the additional species, so it is difficult to tell what is old and what is new without noting the little indicators of the translated parts.

This compact book contains all the elements of a flora: dichotomous keys, descriptions, statements of habitat and distribution, and supplementary discussions of taxonomy and conservation status. The illustrations are a mixture of silhouettes of plants and fronds and line drawings of details. The introductory material provides a glossary and a nice summary of morphology, life cycle, hybridization, and how to use the book. A separate section at the end discusses five non-native species encountered in the region. In spite of this completeness of coverage, the book is layed out in a "user-friendly" format.

Complaints about this excellent guide are few. Buyers should note the existence of an erratum sheet that provides several missing couplets for the key to Aspleniaceae. A few of the drawings from the original work suffer slightly in reprinting. For those who have difficulty handling German text, a copy of the Jermy and Camus book might prove useful as a guide for translating the less obvious technical terms (although it apparently has recently gone out of print). All in all, this book is a handy work for any "fern friend" who might be visiting northern Europe and wish a pocket guide to his or her favorite plants.—GEORGE YATSKIEVYCH, Missouri Botanical Garden, P.O. Box 299 St. Louis, MO 63166-0299.